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(28 April - 11 May 1953)

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Press Day: The tone of the voluminous press and radio output on this topic is set by PRAVDA (5 May) which reiterates that the Soviet free press "is guided in all its activities by the policy of the Party" (ona vo vseoy svoey deyatelnosti rukovodstvuyetsya politikoy partii). Since the Soviet press is the main medium of political education in the country, PRAVDA says, it is expected to do much to raise the people's political and ideological standards--a great deal more, in fact, than it already has. Reflecting the new official accent on citizens' welfare, a theme publicized heavily since Stalin's death, the paper says:

A prominent place on the pages of newspapers must be allotted to questions of housing construction, modernization of cities and settlements, production of mass-consumption goods, and expansion of retail trade and public health service.

CPYRGHT

Russian text:

Znachitelnoye mesto na stranitsakh gazet dolzhny zanyat voprosy zhilishchnogo stroitelstva, blagoustroystva gorodov i poselkov, proizvodstva tovarov massovogo potreblenya, razvitiya torgovli, zdравookhraneniya.

Referring to journalistic activities on the Republic, krai and oblast levels, PRAVDA notes "serious shortcomings" which are yet to be eliminated: there are too many "superficial" (poverkhnostnie) and shallow articles and too few interesting and "instructive" (pouchitelnie) materials. The paper also exhorts the Soviet press to "always safeguard the rights of the working people" (byt vseгда na strazhe prav trudyashchikhsya) as defined in the Constitution of the USSR.

The only unfavorable reference to central papers which "are not doing their best" in publicizing Marxist-Leninist theory appears in a long Lebedev article carried by PRAVDA (5 May). KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA and GUDOK are said to have all but abandoned efforts in this direction. The only time they give Marxism any attention on their pages, Lebedev complains, is on "jubilee dates" (k yubileyным datam), and even then the reader only gets numerous quotations and a rehash of theoretical theses. KUZBAS (Stalino), BRYANSKIY RABOCHIY (Bryansk) and RABOCHIY PUT (Smolensk) suffer from a similar professional disease: "They offer nothing new to the reader" (ne dayut nichego novogo dlya chitatatelya). Such papers, PRAVDA says, seem to forget that the ideological aspects of their work must be given priority over everything else since our society has admittedly not been entirely freed "from survivals of capitalism, prejudices and pernicious traditions of the old society" (ot perezhitkov kapitalizma, ot predrassudkov i vrednykh traditsiy starogo obshchestva).

LITERARY GAZETTE's editorial on Press Day honors PRAVDA, whose meaning, "the truth," symbolizes the Soviet press: "The sacred principle of the Soviet press is to tell the people nothing but the truth" (govorit narodu tolko pravdu--svyashchenniy printsip sovetskoy pechati). The high standards of Soviet journalism can be appreciated particularly when viewed against the background of the "bourgeois reactionary press" which has been derided by some of its own progressive writers; Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Balzac and De Maupassant have exposed the "venality and decadence" of the press in their respective countries, the paper declares.

RADYANSKA UKRAINA says that it is true that the decisions of the 19th Party Congress and Stalin's article "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR" have claimed a little more attention in the press recently "but the scope and breadth of that propaganda are still clearly inadequate" (Ale rozmakh i glybina tsiey propagandy shche yavno nedostatni). Referring to the ideological literary and artistic level of Ukrainian journalism, the paper names CHERNOMORSKA KOMUNA (Odessa), NADNIEPRYANSKA PRAVDA (Kherson) "and others" as bad examples. There are very few worthwhile propaganda articles on their pages, "Communist construction"

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(komunistychnogo budyvnytstva) gets scant attention and the Lenin-Stalin nationality policy is not given the prominence it deserves. Some papers, it claims, still avoid controversial questions; the articles that fill their pages are "gray and mediocre and do not disturb or attack anyone" (siry, bezzuby material, yaki nikogo ne zachipayut i ne khviluyut).

Regional newspapers and transmitters repeat PRAVDA's suggestion that Republic, krai and oblast dailies take a critical look at local papers and news sheets. For example, the Kherson NADNIEPRYANSKA PRAVDA (which is itself sharply criticized by RADYANSKA UKRAINA) says that Ukrainian papers are not doing their part to propagate "the friendship of the Ukrainian people and the Great Russian people." The only way to achieve this is to "expose mercilessly" bourgeois-nationalist ideology, the danger of which must not be under-rated. The paper also wonders why so many rayon papers do not show "the proper vigilance" against ideological aberrations despite repeated assertions from above that a basic objective of Soviet publications is to train readers in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism.

A broadcast from Kostroma (5 May) approves SEVERNAYA PRAVDA's self-criticism for "underrating ideological work" and "failure to expose" the un-Bolshevik aberrations of other papers and organizations. The broadcast says that CHERNOMORSKA KOMUNA is the only paper that failed to "admit the fairness" of criticism recently directed at it from above. In turn "some oblast newspapers" which do not fulfill the ideological requirements outlined by the Party are castigated. They do not struggle as they should "for the cause of peace, friendship among nations" and fail to present a realistic picture of life and work in the USSR.

ZARYA VOSTOKA, the main Georgian Party organ, criticizes itself for the "loud ostentation" (paradnaya shumikha) found in it until quite recently. Although it blames the "former Party leadership" for every other conceivable shortcoming in the Republic, the paper does not impute its own failings to the recently purged leaders. ZARYA VOSTOKA criticizes itself for a number of shortcomings including "failure to expose defects and mistakes in Party and economic work." Nor is this the only instance of questionable ideological performance in the Republican press:

Serious deficiencies marked and still mark our oblast and rayon papers, particularly SOVETSKAYA ABKHAZIA, SHAVCHET ABKHAZETI, SHAVCHET AOSETI and a number of others. Our papers have still not made the proper conclusions from the directives of the last plenary session of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party.

CPYRGHT

Below are typical statements on shortcomings of the regional and local press:

Izmail Oblast--There are still serious shortcomings in the work of PRIDUNAYSKAYA PRAVDA and in a number of rayon and rural papers and wall sheets. Our papers do not publicized examples of Communist labor and socialist competition (Dobryn on Izmail radio, 5 May);

Zaporozhye oblast--The work of our oblast newspapers, especially CHERVONNE ZAPORIZHYE...is still of a low ideological level. Little publicity is given to Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR" and to the decisions of the 19th Party Congress (5 May);

Stavropol Krai--The Trunovskiy and Staro-Maryevskiy rayon Party Committees pay little attention to their newspapers, and as a result newspapers publish materials of poor content.... Direction of newspapers is frequently entrusted to propaganda and agitation departments...(STAVROPOLSKAYA PRAVDA editorial, 5 May).

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Radio Day (7 May), like Press Day, is widely discussed on the Home Service, and particular stress is laid on the "Russian origin" of radio. Emphasis is also given to the importance of broadcasting as a medium of ideological and political education and to criticism for failure to perfect radio work technically and to enlarge the wireless communication industry. There have been hints in the past that some other inventions in the field of radio, radar and television among them, should in all fairness be credited to the USSR, but this claim had never been vigorously pursued. It is now "established" in unequivocal terms by PRAVDA:

Our country is the birthplace of the most outstanding discoveries and inventions in the field of radio, such as radar, radio navigation, television, radio acoustics and the application of high frequency current in the national economy.

Russian text:

Nasha strana--rodina vsekh naiboleye vydayushchikhsya otkrytiy i izobreteniy v oblast radio, tekikh, kak radiolokatsia, radionavigatsia, televidenie, radio-akustika, primenienie tokov vysokoy chastoty v narodnom khozaistve.

The tempo of radiofication "cannot be called satisfactory," and the Ministry of Communications, PRAVDA recalls, failed to complete the 1952 plan, especially in the rural areas. The unenviable performance of that Ministry is said to be further aggravated by the lopsided production of the radio industry: the equipment produced for collective farm radio stations "has substantial constructive deficiencies" (imeyet sushchestvennie konstruktivnye nedostatki) and the shortage of loudspeakers (reproduktory) and spare radio parts must be eliminated.

A PRAVDA article by Psurtsev, Minister of Communications, (5 May) notes the continuing disparity in the number of radio substations and listening outlets (radiotochki) such as receiving sets and loudspeakers for public use. It appears that the acquisition and installation of radio-listening devices has been lagging far behind the construction of new stations, and many of these are working only part time:

It is not uncommon to see substations working at 25 to 30 percent capacity while many kolkhozniks of the neighboring collective farms and inhabited points have no listening devices.

Russian text:

Eshche neredko mozno vstretit radioizly zagruzhennie vsego na 25-30 protsentov, v to vremya kak v blizhaishikh kolkhozakh i naselennykh punktakh mnogie kolkhozniki ne imeyut radiotochek.

PRAVDA's comments on Radio Day are echoed by many papers including RADIANSKA UKRAINA, each of them calling attention to the "Achilles' heel" of the Soviet radiofication program--poor quality and insufficient quantity. The radiofication program is not making much headway "in the country as a whole" (v tselom po strane), according to IZVESTIA, and the Armenian and Georgian SSRs are about the slowest in the country. The government has undertaken to alleviate the shortage of receiving sets by producing a large number of battery-operated sets for distribution among the rural population but these, it is disclosed, "are frequently inoperative due to the lack of batteries" (neredko bezdeistvuyut iz-za otsutstvia batarey).

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RADYANSKA UKRAINA (7 May), reviewing the postwar achievements of the Republic's radio industry, declares that two million radio points (radiotochki) have been restored and 500,000 receiving sets added to the existing facilities, but the overall picture of the Ukraine's radiofication does not necessarily reflect progress in every oblast: Zhitomir, Rovno and Drogobych oblasts are far behind the plan and the "growing requirements of the people." SOTSIALISTICHESKIY DONBAS (9 May) admits that the 1952 radiofication plan in Stalino Oblast was completed by only 54 percent, and that the nonfulfillment of this year's plan has already become apparent in at least five rayons where the local leadership "is reluctant to assume the burden" of improving the broadcasting network.

ZNAMYA KOMMUNIZMA (7 May) is sharply critical of the triteness and monotony of radio broadcasts quite apart from the familiar low ideological level which "should not be tolerated." The oblast broadcasting system must strive to make the daily broadcasts "brighter, more attractive and easier to understand." A broadcast from Voroshilovgrad (7 May) tells the Ukrainian listeners how fortunate they are in having the best radio programs in the world. In America, for example, "millions of people" not only switch off the warmongering broadcasts but also "refuse to purchase radio sets." This is said to have become such a "mass occurrence that the press is greatly concerned about it." A report from Simferopol (6 May) quotes KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA as saying that due to the relaxation of Party controls in Sevastopol and several other Crimean towns the information broadcast by the local radio "is of little actual value," but does not amplify the point. NADNIEPRYANSKA PRAVDA says that Kherson Oblast listeners want but often fail to get "live and interesting radio information rather than dry official reports." The paper says that many local radio transmissions simply do not satisfy the needs of the people who are "bored" by the stereotyped broadcasts.

Victory Day (9 May) gets considerably less press and radio coverage than Press and Radio Day. The holiday is reported to have been marked by the customary lectures, meetings, "public promenades" (gulyanie), and artillery salvos. Conspicuously absent from reminiscences of Soviet military exploits in the last war are any references to Stalin as the "organizer and inspirer" of victory. Also omitted are the familiar recriminations against the wartime allies and the deprecation of their part in the last war, although allusions to the USSR as the chief victor of World War Two are not lacking. Thus TRUD (9 May) speaks of the Soviet people as having "carried on their shoulders the major burden of the fight against fascism" (vynesli na svoikh plechakh osnovenuyu tyazhest borby protiv fashizma) while PRAVDA, recalling the Soviet wartime achievements, says that "the Soviet people have something to be proud of" (sovetskim ludyam est chem gorditsya). This paper also counsels intensified vigilance now because "we must not forget about the intrigues of international reaction" against the land of socialism.

RADYANSKA UKRAINA (9 May) uses the occasion to tell its readers that the last war has provided conclusive proof that the Ukraine's destiny lies with "the friendly family of Soviet peoples" and so long as the Ukrainians remain in that family they need fear "no enemies, external or domestic." Referring to the international situation, the paper deplores the lack of evidence that the capitalist world, especially the United States, is making any effort "to curtail the arms race or to diminish the wide network of war bases" throughout Europe and Asia. And this despite the fact that

the Soviet government, as is obvious from its official statements, will welcome any steps of other countries directed toward the relaxation of tension in the international situation, and would like to see the peaceful statements made by the leaders of those countries supported by concrete acts.

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Ukrainian text:

radynskiy uryad, yak vidomo z yoho ofitsialnykh zayav, vitatyme bud-yaki kroki uryadiv inshykh derzhav diysno spryamovannykh do rozryadki napruzhenosti i v mizhnardoni obstanovtsi, i khotiv by bachyty pidkryplenia dilami myrnykh zayav zroblennykh kirivnykamy tsikh uriydiv.

IZVESTIA (9 May), aside from printing Bulganin's Order of the Day and the exchange of congratulatory messages between Malenkov and Grotewohl, has no editorial comment on VE Day. A few regional broadcasts--from Astrakhan, Voronezh and others--mark the holiday by noting various sports events sponsored by the local DOSAAF organizations without any allusion to the wider significance of VE Day.

Industrial Shortcomings: Central and regional output on industry in the two weeks under review was greatly curtailed because of the large amount of material on the three anniversaries mentioned above. The major issue highlighted is the so-called "regime of economy" (rezhim ekonomii) in production, a topic revived periodically in discussions of overhead expenditures and the financial aspect of industrial plans. PRAVDA (6 May) castigates industrial and railroad officials who strive to produce favorable production indexes regardless of cost even if their efforts involve great wastes of funds and material. We still have "quite a few" (nemalo) lagging enterprises, and the huge Rostov-Agricultural Machine Plant is one of them, PRAVDA says. This plant not only failed to cope with its plans for the first quarter of the year but also increased output of "rejects" (brak) as compared with the corresponding period of last year. This made it impossible to cut down production costs as planned. The present performance of a number of enterprises under the Minister of the Building Materials Industry which has "a negligent attitude" (neradivoye otnoshenie) toward the expenditures of raw and other materials is unpromising. Flagrant disregard for economy in production is cited in the case of the Southern Railway (yuzhnaya doroga) administration where greater effort on the part of the management could eliminate losses "which continue to amount to many millions of rubles" (kotorie ischislyayutsya zdes eshche mnogimi millionami rubley).

KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA (28 April) speaks of the "alarmingly slow progress" shown by some of the largest oblast industrial enterprises, including the entire local industry of the Oblast Industrial Council (obl-prom-sovet). All of them are said to be equipped with "first rate" machinery, manned with highly qualified cadres and "not suffering from any shortage of raw materials" but nevertheless are behind the plan. Poor management, it implies, is the only verdict that can be rendered in this case, and something will have to be done fast because "such a situation is absolutely intolerable."

ZARYA VOSTOKA (6 May) still uses the "former leadership" of the Georgian Communist Party as a scapegoat for all shortcomings. The production failings of Tbilisi industry are referred to as the "heritage" of the previous Party Central Committee, although no reason is offered as to why many of the enterprises are still "practicing gross deception" of the government. "The production plan for the first quarter of 1953 is said to have suffered a serious setback which is not wholly reflected in their production indexes: 'the average figures conceal many backward sectors of production.'" In Abkhaz oblast also production has been snarled by mismanagement and lack of control by the Party, which "has lost sight of many serious questions" connected with industrial work as well as building projects. Urgent production problems awaiting solution are discussed by NADNIEPRYANSKA PRAVDA in sharply critical terms. The local cooperative and invalids' industries are reported to be showing symptoms of a familiar disease: "large-scale idleness of equipment". cursory treatment of industrial shortcomings is contained also in a review of MOLDOVA SOCIALISTA (Moldavian SSR, 10 May), RADYANSKA ZHITOMIRSHCHINA and SOTSIALISTICHESKIY DONBAS (8 May).

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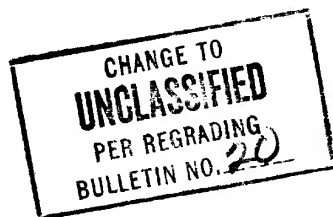
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SUMMARY

Of the three anniversary days occurring within the period under review--Press Day, Radio and VE Day--the first two are played up by the press and radio.

Press day: the broad outlines of press functions set forth by PRAVDA merely emphasize 19th Party Congress decisions covering "the tasks" of Soviet journalism. Other editorials and broadcasts cite the duties of the press in the implementation of the Five Year Plan, education of the workers in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, and maintenance of ideological vigilance against the "survivals of capitalism."

Radio Day is marked as a peculiarly Russian-Soviet holiday inasmuch as "Russia is the birthplace of wireless communication." Russian-Soviet "priority" in that field is now extended to include the invention of three-dimensional television although "some unsolved problems" along those lines are admitted. Local Party organizations are urged to tighten control over broadcast content as well as over radiofication work, which "regrettably" is not proceeding smoothly.

Victory Day is given less attention than the other two anniversaries. The vituperative attacks on the West heard on this occasion in the past are omitted. A common note struck by Soviet propaganda on all three anniversaries is that the desire for peace is still a Soviet monopoly but that the uphill struggle toward that goal could be eased by the capitalist world if it desired.

The predominant theme in the meager output on industry is honesty and is discussed in the context of the current economy drive. Production costs could be considerably lower and the quality of the output higher were it not for "gross deception" practiced by a section of management. On holidays, however, the tendency is to soft-pedal shortcomings and to concentrate on self-praise.

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